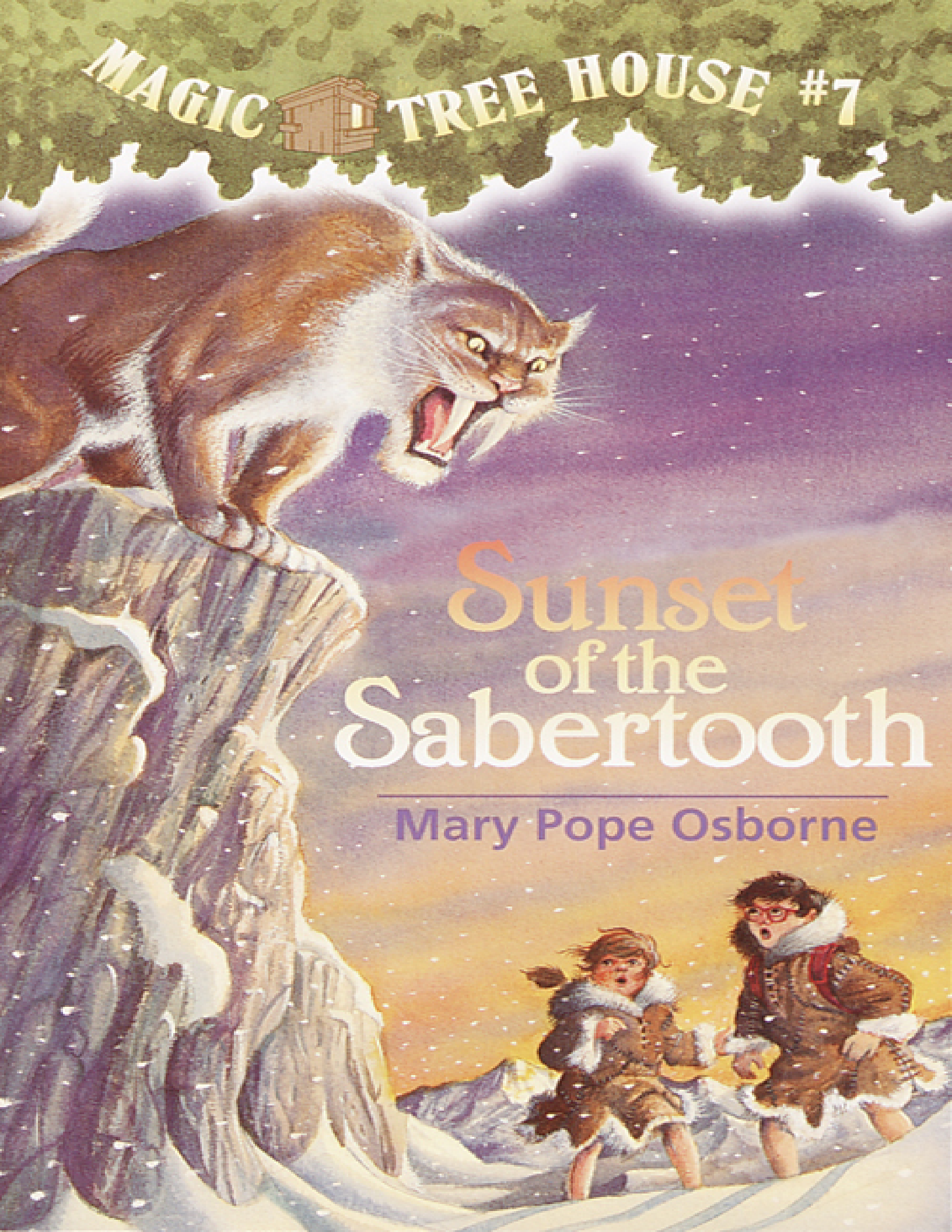
MAGIC TREE HOUSE #7



Sunset of the Sabertooth

Mary Pope Osborne

Here's what kids have to say to
Mary Pope Osborne, author of
the Magic Tree House series:

WOW! You have an imagination like no other.—Adam W.

I love your books. If you stop writing books, it will be like losing a best friend.—Ben M.

I think you are the real Morgan le Fay. There is always magic in your books.—Erica Y.

One day I was really bored and I didn't want to read … I looked in your book. I read a sentence, and it was interesting. So I read some more, until the book was done. It was so good I read more and more. Then I had read all of your books, and now I hope you write lots more.—Danai K.

I always read [your books] over and over … 1 time, 2 times, 3 times, 4 times … —Yuan C.

You are my best author in the world. I love your books. I read all the time. I read everywhere. My mom is like freaking out.—Ellen C.

I hope you make these books for all yours and mine's life.—Riki H.

Teachers and librarians love
Magic Tree House® books, too!

Thank you for opening faraway places and times to my class through your books. They have given me the chance to bring in additional books, materials, and videos to share with the class.—J. Cameron

It excites me to see how involved [my fourth-grade reading class] is in your books … I would do anything to get my students more involved, and this has done it.—C. Rutz

I discovered your books last year … WOW! Our students have gone crazy over them. I can't order enough copies! … Thanks for contributing so much to children's literature!—C. Kendziora

I first came across your Magic Tree House series when my son brought one home … I have since introduced this great series to my class. They have absolutely fallen in love with these books! … My students are now asking me for more independent reading time to read them.

Your stories have inspired even my most struggling readers.—M. Payne

I love how I can go beyond the [Magic Tree House] books and use them as springboards for other learning.—R. Gale

We have enjoyed your books all year long. We check your Web site to find new information. We pull our map down to find the areas where the adventures take place. My class always chimes in at key parts of the story. It feels good to hear my students ask for a book and cheer when a new book comes out.—J. Korinek

Our students have "Magic Tree House fever." I can't keep your books on the library shelf.—J. Rafferty

Your books truly invite children into the pleasure of reading. Thanks for such terrific work.—S. Smith

The children in the fourth grade even hide the [Magic Tree House] books in the library so that

they will be able to find them when they are ready to check them out.—K. Mortensen

My Magic Tree House books are never on the bookshelf because they are always being read by my students. Thank you for creating such a wonderful series.—K. Mahoney

MAGIC TREE HOUSE® #7

Sunset of the Sabertooth

by Mary Pope Osborne
illustrated by Sal Murdocca

A STEPPING STONE BOOK™
Random House New York

Text copyright © 1996 by Mary Pope Osborne.

Illustrations copyright © 1996 by Sal Murdocca.

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions.

Published in the United States by Random House, Inc., New York.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Osborne, Mary Pope. Sunset of the sabertooth / by Mary Pope Osborne ; illustrated by Sal Murdocca.

p. cm. — (The Magic tree house series ; # 7) "A first stepping stone book." SUMMARY: The magic tree house transports Jack and Annie on a mission to the Ice Age where they encounter Cro-Magnons, cave bears, sabertooth tigers, and woolly mammoths.

eISBN: 978-0-375-89424-4

[1. Man, Prehistoric—Fiction. 2. Prehistoric animals—Fiction.

3. Time travel—Fiction. 4. Magic—Fiction.]

I. Murdocca, Sal, ill. II. Title. III. Series. Osborne, Mary Pope. Magic tree house series ; #7.

PZ7.O81167Su 1996 [Fic]—dc20 95-34697

Random House, Inc. New York, Toronto, London, Sydney, Auckland

www.randomhouse.com

www.randomhouse.com/magictreehouse

v3.0

Contents

Cover

Title Page

Copyright

Dedication

Prologue

1. The “M” Things
2. Bones
3. Brrr!
4. Cave Kids
5. Snow Tracks
6. Song on the Wind
7. The Sorcerer’s Gift
8. The Great Parade
9. Master of the Animals
10. This Age

Special Preview of **Magic Tree House #8: *Midnight on the Moon***

To all the kids who've helped me

Prologue

One summer day in Frog Creek, Pennsylvania, a mysterious tree house appeared in the woods.

Eight-year-old Jack and his seven-year-old sister, Annie, climbed into the tree house. They found it was filled with books.

Jack and Annie soon discovered that the tree house was magic. It could take them to the places in the books. All they had to do was to point to a picture and wish to go there.

Jack and Annie visited dinosaurs, knights, an Egyptian queen, pirates, ninjas, and the Amazon rain forest.

Along the way, they discovered that the tree house belonged to Morgan le Fay. Morgan was a magical librarian. She traveled through time and space, gathering books for King Arthur's library.

On their fifth adventure, in *Night of the Ninjas*, Jack and Annie found a little mouse in the tree house. Annie named their new friend "Peanut."

Jack and Annie also found a note from Morgan. The note told them that she was under a spell. To free her, Jack and Annie must find four special things.

They found the first thing in old Japan, and the second in the Amazon rain forest.

Now Jack and Annie and Peanut are about to set out in search of the third thing … in *Sunset of the Sabertooth*.

1
The "M" Things

"Let's go to the tree house," said Annie.

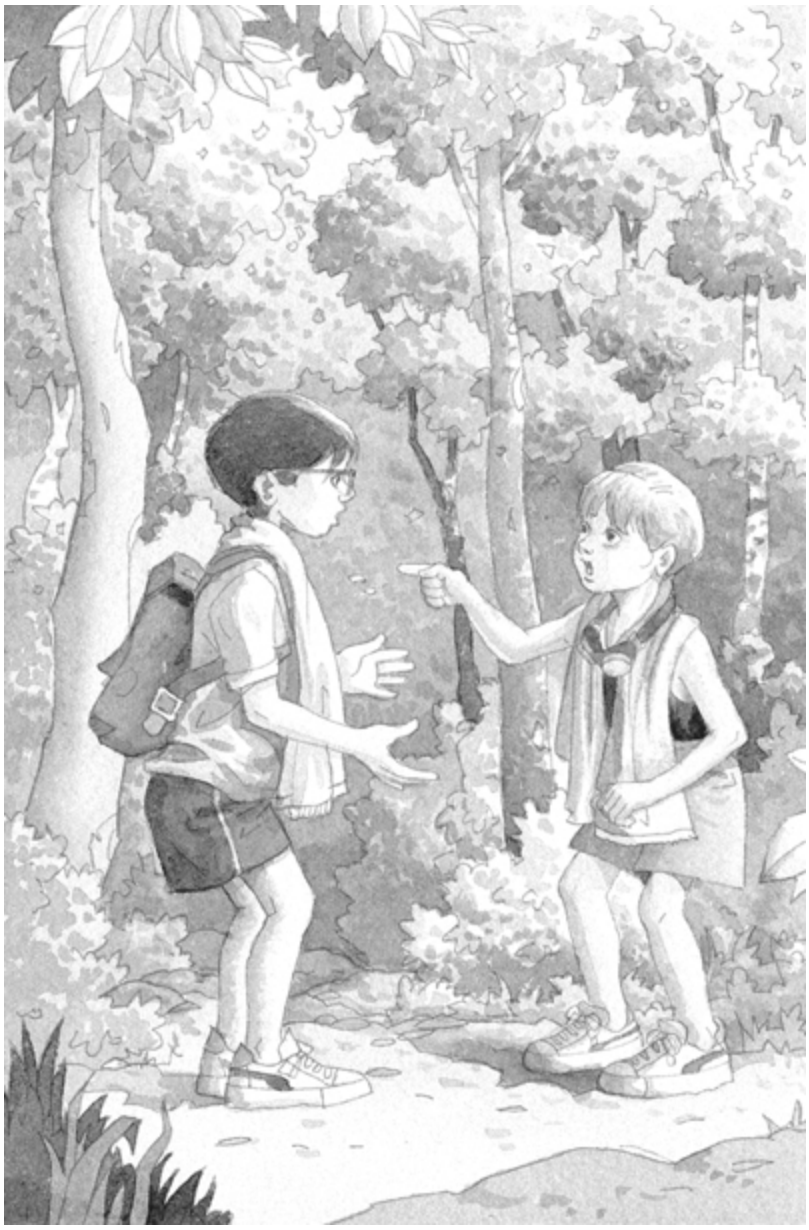
She and Jack were passing the Frog Creek woods on their way home from their swimming class at the Y.

"No. I want to go home and change out of my bathing suit," said Jack.

"Oh, that'll take too long," said Annie. "Don't you want to save Morgan as soon as possible?"

"Of course," said Jack.

"Then come on! Before the sun sets!" said Annie.



She darted into the woods.

Jack sighed. He gave up on the idea of changing out of his bathing suit.

He pushed his glasses into place. He followed Annie into the Frog Creek woods.

The warm air smelled fresh and green.

He moved through patches of sunlight and shadow. Soon he came to a small clearing.

He looked up. There it was. The magic tree house in the tallest tree in the woods.

“Hurry!” called Annie. She was climbing the rope ladder up to the tree house.

Jack grabbed the ladder. He started up after her.

Finally they reached the tree house.

Squeak. A mouse sat on the window sill.

“Hi, Peanut!” cried Annie.

Jack patted the tiny head.

“Sorry we didn’t come sooner,” Annie said. “But we had to go to our swimming lesson.”

Squeak.

“What happened while we were gone?” asked Annie, looking around the tree house.

Jack stared at the large M carved into the wooden floor.

On the M were a moonstone and a mango, the special things they’d found on their last two journeys.

“Hey, guess what?” said Jack. “*Moonstone* and *mango* start with the letter M. Just like *Morgan*.”

“You’re right,” said Annie.

“I bet all four things start with an M,” said Jack.

“Right,” said Annie. “I wonder where we’ll find the next one.”

She and Jack stared at the stacks of books in the tree house. Books on the Amazon rain forest, ninjas, pirates, mummies, knights, and dinosaurs.

All of them were closed. Only one book lay open in the corner.

“We’re just about to find out,” said Jack.

They walked over to the open book.

They looked at the page the book was opened to. It showed a picture of rocks and snow.

“Wow,” said Annie, running her finger over the picture. “I love snow. I wish we could go there right now.”

“Wait,” said Jack. “We’re not prepared.” Then he had another thought. “And we’re wearing our bathing suits! Stop!”

“Oops,” said Annie.

Too late. The wind started to blow.

The leaves started to shake.

The tree house started to spin.

It spun faster and faster!

Then everything was silent.

It was as silent as the falling snow.

2
Bones

Jack, Annie, and Peanut looked outside.

Snow was falling from a gray sky.

The tree house was in the tallest tree in a grove of tall, bare trees.

The grove was on a wide, white plain. Beyond the plain were high, rocky cliffs.

“I’m c-cold,” said Annie. Her teeth chattered. She wrapped her towel tightly around her.

Sq-squeak. Peanut sounded cold, too.

“Poor mouse,” said Annie. “I’ll put you into Jack’s pack. You’ll be warmer there.”

Annie slipped Peanut into the pocket of the backpack.

“We have to go home,” said Jack. “We need warmer clothes.”

“We can’t go home,” said Annie. “We can’t find the Pennsylvania book. Not until our mission is complete. Remember? That’s the way the magic works.”

“Oh … right,” said Jack. He looked around. There was no sign of the Pennsylvania book that always took them home.

Annie peered out the window again. “Where are we, anyway?” she asked.

“I’ll find out,” said Jack. He picked up the open book and read the title on the cover. “*Life in the Ice Age*.”

“*Ice Age?*” said Annie. “No wonder we’re cold.”

“We better find the third M thing soon,” said Jack. “Before we freeze to death.”

“Look,” whispered Annie, “people.” She pointed out the window.

Jack saw them, too: four figures on a cliff. Two big figures and two little ones—all holding long spears.

“Who are they?” said Annie.

“I’ll look in the book,” said Jack.

He found a picture of some people. He read the caption to Annie:

Early modern humans were called Cro-Magnons. During the late Ice Age in Europe, they sometimes lived in caves beneath cliffs.

“Why are they carrying spears?” said Annie.

Jack turned the page. He found another picture of the Cro-Magnons. He read aloud:

> **The Cro-Magnon family often hunted together. They covered deep pits with branches. Then they drove reindeer and mammoths into the traps.**

“Oh, trapping the animals—that’s sad,” said Annie.

“No, it’s not,” said Jack. “They couldn’t live without hunting. They didn’t have supermarkets, you know.”

They watched the family disappear over the other side of the cliff.

“Come on, I’m freezing,” said Jack. “Let’s hurry and find the M thing while the Cro-Magnons are hunting.”

“But I want to meet them,” said Annie.

“Forget it,” said Jack. “They don’t have books that tell them about *us*. They’ll think we’re some enemy and hurl their spears.”

“Yikes,” said Annie.

Jack put his book away.

Squeak. Peanut peeked out of the backpack.

“Stay in there,” said Annie.

Jack pulled on his pack and started down the rope ladder.

Annie followed.

On the icy ground, they huddled together.

The wind was biting. Jack put his towel over his head. Snow blew against his glasses.

“Hey, Jack,” said Annie. “Look at me.”

Annie had put on her swimming goggles. “Now I can see,” she said.

“Good thinking,” said Jack. “Now cover your head with your towel. Most of your body heat is lost through your head.”

Annie wrapped her towel around her head.

“We should find a cave or someplace warmer,” said Jack.

“I bet there are caves in those cliffs,” said Annie.

She and Jack started across the white plain. The snow wasn’t deep yet. But the wind was blowing hard.

“I told you!” Annie pointed to an opening in the rocks—a *cave*.

They ran to it.

“Careful,” said Jack. They stepped carefully into the shadowy cave.

It was only slightly warmer inside. But at least the wind wasn’t blowing.

In the gray light, they stamped the snow off their sneakers.

Annie took off her goggles.

“It smells in here,” said Jack.

“Yeah, like a wet dog,” said Annie.

“Let me see what I can find out,” said Jack.

He pulled out the Ice Age book.

“I’ll look around,” said Annie. “Maybe the M thing is here. Then we can go home and get warm.”

Jack stood by the entrance so he could read the book.

“This cave is filled with sticks,” Annie said.

“What?” said Jack. He didn’t look up from the book.

“No, wait. I think they’re *bones*,” said Annie.

“Bones?” echoed Jack.

“Yeah. Lots of them back here. All over the floor.”

Jack turned the pages of his book. He found a picture of a cave filled with bones.

“I hear something,” said Annie.

Jack read the writing below the picture of the cave. It said:

> **The great cave bears of the Ice Age were over eight feet tall. These bears were larger and fiercer than today’s grizzlies. Their caves were filled with the bones of their ancestors.**

“Annie!” whispered Jack. “Get back here now!”

They were in the cave of a great cave bear!

3
Brrr!

“Annie!” whispered Jack again.

No answer.

He put his book quietly into his pack. He stepped deeper into the cave.

“Annie!” he said a little louder.

Jack stepped on the bones.

The wet dog smell grew stronger.

He kept going, deeper into the smelly blackness.

He ran into something. He gasped.

“Jack?” said Annie. “Is that you?”

“Didn’t you hear me calling?” Jack whispered. “We have to get out of here!”

“Wait,” she said. “Someone’s sleeping back there. Hear him snoring?”

Jack heard a low, deep moaning. It was loud, then soft. Loud, then soft.

“That’s not a person,” he said. “It’s a great cave bear!”

A booming snore shattered the air.

“Yikes!” said Annie.

“Go! Go*!*” said Jack.

He and Annie ran through the cave, over the bones, and out into the falling snow.

They kept on going. They ran between fallen rocks and under jagged cliffs.

Finally they stopped and turned around.

All they could see was snow and rocks and their own footprints.

No bear.

“Whew,” said Annie. “That was lucky.”

“Yeah,” said Jack. “He probably never even woke up. We just got in a panic.”

Annie huddled close to Jack. “Brrr! I’m f-freezing,” she said.

“Me too,” he said.

He took off his glasses to wipe off the snow. The cold wind blew against his bare legs.

“Wow,” Annie said. “Look.” She pointed to something behind Jack.

“What?” Jack put his glasses back on and turned around.

Under a cliff was a wide ledge. Under the ledge was another cave.

Only *this* cave seemed to have a golden glow.

This one looked cozy and safe and warm.

4
Cave Kids

Jack and Annie crept to the cave and peeked inside.

A small flame danced from a bed of glowing coals.

Near the fire were knives, axes, and hollowed-out stones.

Animal skins were neatly stacked against the wall.

"People must live here," said Annie.

"Maybe it's the home of the Cro-Magnons we saw," said Jack, looking around.

"Let's go inside and get warm," said Annie.

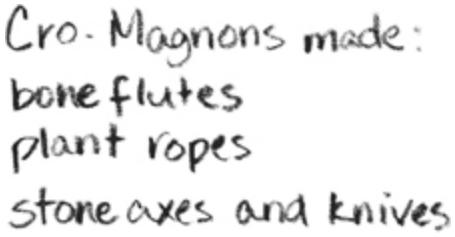
Jack and Annie moved quickly to the fire and warmed their hands.

Their shadows danced on the stone walls.

Jack pulled out his Ice Age book. He found a picture of a cave. He read:

> **Cro-Magnons made many things from animals, plants, and stone. They made flute-like musical instruments from mammoth bones. They made ropes by braiding plant fibers. They made axes and knives from stone.**

Jack pulled out his notebook and pencil. He started a list:



"Ta-da!" said Annie.

Jack looked up. Annie was wearing a coat.

It had a hood and long sleeves. It went all the way down to her sneakers.

"Where did you get that?" said Jack.

"From that pile of furry skins," said Annie, pointing. "These must be their clothes. Maybe they're being mended."

She picked up another coat and handed it to Jack.

"Try one. It's really warm," she said.

Jack put his backpack and towel down on the hard dirt floor. He slipped on the coat.

It did feel very warm—and soft.

“We look like cave kids,” said Annie.

Squeak. Peanut peeked out of Jack’s pack lying on the floor.

“You stay in there,” said Annie. “There’s no teeny coat for you.”

Peanut vanished back into the pack.

“I wonder how they made these coats,” said Jack.

He turned the pages in the book until he found a picture of Cro-Magnon women sewing. He read:

Cro-Magnons scraped reindeer skins with flint rocks to make them soft.

They used bone needles to sew the skins together for clothing.

Jack added to his list:

reindeer-skin clothes

“I hope the cave people won’t mind if we borrow their coats,” said Jack.

“Maybe we should give them our towels,” said Annie. “To thank them.”

“Good idea.”

“And my goggles, too,” said Annie.

They left their gifts on top of the rest of the animal skins.

“Let’s explore the cave before they come home,” said Jack.

“It’s too dark in the back,” said Annie. “We won’t be able to see anything.”

“I’ll find out how Cro-Magnons saw in the dark,” said Jack.

He opened the Ice Age book. He found a picture of cave people holding odd-looking lamps. He read aloud to Annie:

Cro-Magnons made stone lamps. They hollowed out a rock, filled it with animal fat, then burned a wick made from moss.

"There!" said Annie. She pointed to two stones near the fire. In the hollow of each was gooey white stuff and a pile of moss.

"We have to be careful," said Jack.

He picked up one stone. It was smaller than a soup bowl, but much heavier.

Jack held the stone close to the fire and lit the piece of moss.

He lit another lamp and gave it to Annie.

"Carry it with two hands," he said.

"I know," she said.

Jack tucked the book under his arm. He and Annie carried their stone lamps to the back of the cave.

"Hey, I wonder where this goes," said Annie. She held her lamp up to an opening in the wall.

"I'll check in the book," said Jack.

He put down his lamp and flipped through the Ice Age book.

"I think it's a tunnel," she said. "Be right back."

"Wait a second," said Jack.

Too late—she had squeezed into the opening and was gone.

"Oh brother," said Jack, sighing.

He closed his book and peeked into the opening.

“Come back here!” he said.

“No! You come *here!* ” said Annie. Her voice sounded far away. “You won’t believe this!”

Jack picked up his lamp and book. He ducked into a small tunnel.

“Wow!” came Annie’s voice.

Jack could see her lamp flickering at the other end.

Crouching clown, he hurried toward her. At the end of the tunnel was a huge cavern with a high ceiling.

Annie held her lamp close to the wall.

“Look,” she said. Her voice echoed.

Animals were painted on the wall in strokes of red and black and yellow.

There were cave bears and lions, elk and reindeer, bison and woolly rhinos and mammoths.

In the flickering light, the prehistoric beasts looked alive.

5
Snow Tracks

"Wow, what is this place?" said Jack.

"Maybe it's an art gallery," said Annie.

"I don't think so," said Jack. "It's too hard to get to."

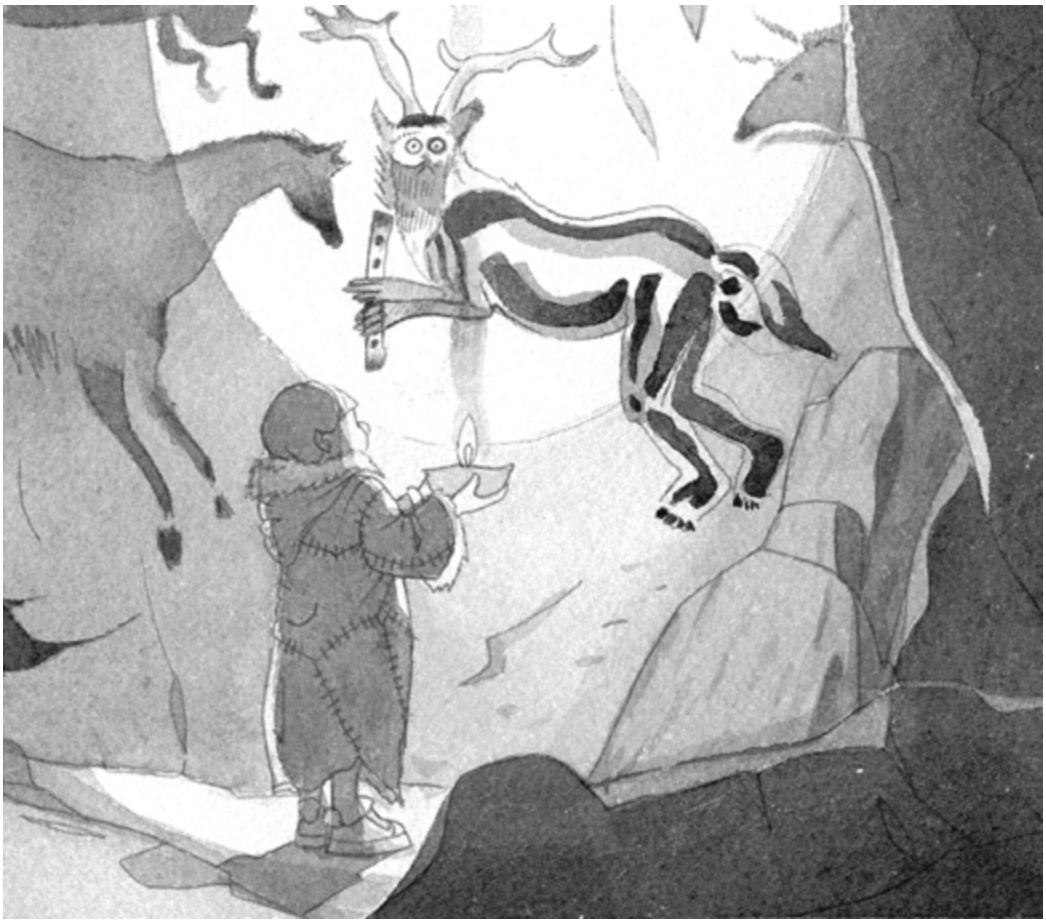
He read about the cave paintings:

> **These Ice Age beasts were painted 25,000 years ago. Cro-Magnons painted pictures of animals they hunted. They may have believed the paintings would give them power over the animals.**

"Wow, look at this," said Annie.

She pointed at a painting farther down the wall.

It showed a figure with human arms and legs, reindeer antlers, and an owl face. It seemed to be holding a flute.



Jack looked at the book again. He found a picture of the figure and read:

> **Cave men may have been led by a sorcerer, or "Master of the Animals." He may have worn reindeer antlers so he could run like a reindeer—and an owl mask so he could see like an owl.**

“What is it?” said Annie.

“The Master of the Animals,” said Jack. “He’s a sorcerer.”

“Oh wow,” breathed Annie. “That’s it.”

“That’s what?”

“That’s who we have to find.”

“Why?”

“Maybe he’s a friend of Morgan’s,” said Annie.

Jack nodded slowly. “Maybe,” he said.

“Let’s go find him,” said Annie.

They went back through the tunnel into the first cave.

“We better put our lamps back,” said Jack.

He and Annie blew out their lamps.

They placed them back by the fire.

Jack’s backpack was on the floor next to the skins. He put the Ice Age book into it.

“How’s Peanut?” said Annie.

Jack looked into his pack. “She’s not here,” he said.

“Oh no!” cried Annie. “She must have crawled out when we were looking at the paintings.”

“Peanut!” Jack called.

“Peanut!” called Annie.

Annie walked slowly around the cave, looking into the shadows.

Jack peered around the fire and under each of the furry skins.

“Jack! Come here!” said Annie.

She was standing near the entrance to the cave.

The snow had stopped falling.

In the snow were tiny tracks.

6
Song on the Wind

“Peanut’s tracks,” said Annie. “We have to find her before she freezes.”

She wrapped her reindeer coat around her and headed across the snow.

Jack pulled on his backpack and followed.

The mouse’s tracks led them between the fallen rocks and back onto the open plain.

The wind blew harder. Snow swirled over the ground, covering the tiny footprints.

“I can’t see them anymore!” wailed Annie.

She and Jack now stood in the middle of the plain. They stared at the windswept snow.

The mouse’s tracks had vanished.

“Yikes,” whispered Annie, staring up.

Jack followed her gaze. On one of the cliffs was a tiger. A giant tiger with two long, sharp fangs.

“A *sabertooth*,” said Jack.

“I hope he doesn’t see us,” whispered Annie.

“Me too,” Jack whispered back. “We’d better head back to the tree house.”

Jack and Annie stepped very softly across the snow. Then Jack glanced back at the cliff.

The sabertooth was gone.

“Oh man,” he said. “Where is he?”

“Run to the trees!” said Annie.

He and Annie started running. They ran over the snowy plain, heading toward the tall, bare trees in the distance.

Suddenly Jack heard a *crack*.

The ground caved in, and Jack went with it.

Annie fell beside him.

They crashed down onto a heap of branches, snow, and earth.

They struggled to stand. Jack pushed his glasses into place.

“You all right?” he asked Annie.

“Yes,” she said.

They both looked up. They were in a deep hole. All Jack could see were gray clouds moving overhead.

“This is a trap,” Jack said. “The Cro-Magnons must have put branches over this hole. Then the snow hid the branches. So we

didn't see them."

"There's no way out," said Annie.

She was right. They were helpless. The pit was too deep to climb out of.

"I feel like a trapped animal," Annie said.

"Me too," said Jack.

He heard a yowl in the distance.

"The sabertooth!" whispered Annie.

Jack pulled out the Ice Age book. He found a picture of the sabertooth. He read:

> **The sabertooth was the fiercest beast of the Ice Age. It attacked humans as well as woolly mammoths and other large animals.**

"Oh brother," said Jack.

"Listen!" Annie grabbed him.

"What?" Jack jumped.

"I hear music."

Jack listened. But all he heard was the wind.

"You hear it?" said Annie.

"No," said Jack.

"Listen carefully."

He closed his eyes. He listened very carefully.

He heard the wind. But this time he heard another sound, too.

Strange, haunting music.

“Ahhh!” cried Annie.

Jack opened his eyes.

Staring down at them was a figure wearing reindeer antlers and an owl mask.

“The sorcerer,” whispered Jack.

Squeak.

Peanut peered down at them, too!

7
The Sorcerer's Gift

The sorcerer didn't speak. He stared through the eyeholes of the owl mask.

"Help us, please," said Annie.

The sorcerer threw a rope into the pit. Jack grabbed it.

"He wants to pull us up," said Annie.

Jack looked up. The sorcerer was gone.

"Where did he go?" Jack said.

"Tug on the rope," said Annie.

Jack tugged. The rope tightened. It began rising.

"I'll go first!" said Annie cheerfully.

"Annie, this isn't a game," warned Jack.

"Don't worry, I'll be careful."

Jack gave her the rope. "Okay. But hold on tight," he said.

Annie held the rope with both hands. She pushed her feet against the side of the pit. She rose into the air with the rope.

She kept pressing against the side of the pit—until she reached the top.

Jack saw the sorcerer reappear and help Annie up. Then they moved out of sight.

Jack was puzzled. The sorcerer had used both hands to help Annie. So who held the other end of the rope?

"Wow!" came Annie's voice.

What's going on? Jack wondered.

The sorcerer came back and threw the rope down again.

Jack grabbed it. And the rope started to rise.

Jack held on tight. He started up. His hands burned. His arms felt as if they were being pulled out of their sockets.

But he kept his hold on the rope and his feet against the side of the pit.

At the top the sorcerer pulled Jack onto the snowy ground.

"Thanks," said Jack, standing.

The sorcerer was tall. He wore a long fur robe. Jack could see only his eyes through the owl mask.

"Hey!" Annie called.

Jack turned.

Annie was sitting on a woolly mammoth.

Squeak. Peanut was sitting on the mammoth's head.

The mammoth looked like a giant elephant with shaggy reddish hair and long, curved tusks.

The other end of the rope was around the mammoth's huge neck.

"Lulu pulled us up," said Annie.

"Lulu?" said Jack.

"Don't you think she looks like a Lulu?" said Annie.

"Oh brother," said Jack. He walked up to the mammoth.

"Hey, mammoth starts with M," said Annie. "Maybe Lulu's the special thing!"

"I don't think so," said Jack.

The great creature knelt down, just like a circus elephant.

"Whoa!" said Annie. She clutched the mammoth's ears to keep from falling off.

The sorcerer helped Jack climb onto the mammoth.

“Thanks,” said Jack.

Then the sorcerer reached into a pouch. He pulled out a smooth white bone and handed it to Jack.

The bone was hollow. It had four holes along one side. And two on the other.

“Oh man, I think it’s his flute,” said Jack. “The book said they make flutes from mammoth bones.”

Jack tried to give the flute back to the sorcerer.

“Nice,” he said politely.

But the sorcerer held up his hand.

“He wants you to keep the mammoth bone,” said Annie.

“*Mammoth bone*,” whispered Jack. “Hey, maybe this is the third thing.”

Jack looked at the sorcerer. “Do you know Morgan?” he asked.

The sorcerer did not answer. But his eyes sparkled with kindness.

He turned away from Jack and untied the mammoth’s rope. Then he whispered in the ear of the giant woolly creature.

When the mammoth stood up, Jack gripped Annie’s coat to keep from falling off. He felt miles above the ground.

He nestled behind Annie, in the dip between the mammoth’s head and huge curved back.

The mammoth took slow, plodding steps across the snow, then picked up speed.

"Where are we going?" said Jack as they bumped up and down.

"To the tree house!" said Annie.

"How does he know where it is?" said Jack.

"*She* just knows," said Annie.

Jack looked back.

The sorcerer was standing in the snow, watching them.

But at that moment the clouds parted, and the sun came out.

Jack was blinded by sunlight on the snow.

He squinted to see—but the sorcerer had vanished.

8
The Great Parade

The huge mammoth walked across the open plain.

"Look!" said Annie. She pointed to a herd of elk in the distance. They had great, wide antlers.

"There!" said Jack as a herd of reindeer came into view. They pranced gracefully across the snow.

Then a woolly rhino joined them on the open plain. Then a bison!

The elk, reindeer, rhino, and bison moved along with them, at a distance.

They seemed to be escorting Jack and Annie back to the tree house.

The snow sparkled with sunlight.

This is a great parade, Jack thought. *Fantastic*.

They were getting closer and closer to the grove of tall trees.

"I told you," said Annie. "Lulu's taking us home."

But just then the mammoth let out a cry. All the other animals bounded off.

Peanut started to squeak.

Jack looked around.

Behind them the sabertooth was slinking across the sunlit snow!

The woolly mammoth roared and plunged forward.

Jack and Annie nearly fell off.

Jack clutched Annie. She and Peanut clutched the mammoth's shaggy hair.

The mammoth thundered wildly over the ground.

"Ahhh!" Jack and Annie yelled.

The mammoth charged to the grove of trees.

But the tiger had circled around the trees. He stood between the tallest tree and the mammoth.

They were trapped.

The sabertooth began moving slowly toward the mammoth.

The woolly mammoth roared fiercely.

But Jack knew a sabertooth could kill any creature, including a mammoth.

The huge tiger’s head was down. His burning eyes were fixed on the mammoth. His long white fangs glinted in the sunlight.

9
Master of the Animals

The sabertooth crept forward.

Jack stared in horror.

"Play the flute," whispered Annie.

Is she nuts? Jack thought.

"Try!" said Annie.

Jack held the mammoth-bone flute to his lips. He blew.

The flute made a strange sound.

The tiger froze. He glared at Jack.

Jack's hands shook.

The tiger growled. He took another step.

The mammoth roared and stomped the ground.

"Play it!" said Annie. "Keep playing!"

Jack blew again.

The sabertooth froze again.

Jack kept blowing until he ran out of breath.

The tiger snarled.

"He's still here," whispered Annie. "Keep it up."

Jack closed his eyes. He took a deep breath. Then he blew as hard and as long as he could. He covered and uncovered the holes on the bone.

The music sounded strange—as if it were coming from another world.

“He’s leaving!” Annie whispered.

Jack raised his eyes. The sabertooth was slinking off toward the cliffs.

“We did it!” said Annie.

Jack lowered the flute. He felt very tired.

The mammoth waved her trunk happily.

“To the tree house, Lulu,” said Annie.

The woolly mammoth snorted. Then she lumbered over to the tallest tree.

From the back of the mammoth, Jack grabbed the rope ladder. He held it for Annie.

She stroked the mammoth’s giant ear. “Bye, Lulu. Thank you,” she said.

Annie grabbed the rope ladder. Then she started up. Peanut climbed up, too.

After they disappeared into the tree house, Jack climbed onto the ladder.

He looked back at the woolly mammoth. “Bye, girl,” he said. “Go home now. And watch out for the sabertooth.”

The mammoth walked away into the sunset.

When Jack couldn’t see her anymore, he started up the lope ladder. He pulled himself into the tree house.

“Ta-da!” said Annie. She handed the Pennsylvania book to Jack.

Jack smiled. Now he was positive they had found the third M thing. Their mission was complete.

“Before we leave, we have to give our coats back,” said Annie.

“Oh right,” said Jack.

They took off their reindeer-skin coats and dropped them to the ground.

“Brrr!” said Annie. “I hope the Cro-Magnon people find them.”

Jack stared out the window. He wanted to take one last look at the prehistoric world.

The sun was setting behind the hills. Four people were crossing the snowy plain. It was the Cro-Magnon family.

“Hey!” shouted Annie.

“Shhh!” said Jack.

The Cro-Magnons stopped and peered in Annie and Jack’s direction.

“We left your reindeer skins! Down there!” Annie pointed to the ground.

The tallest person stepped forward and raised a spear.

“Time to go,” said Jack.

He grabbed the Pennsylvania book. He found the picture of Frog Creek and pointed at it. “I wish we could go home,” he said.

“Good-bye! Good luck!” Annie called, waving out the window.

The wind started to blow. And the tree house started to spin.

It spun faster and faster.

Then everything was still.

Absolutely still.

10
This Age

Birds sang. The air was soft and warm.

"I hope they find their coats," said Annie.

"Me too," said Jack. He pushed his glasses into place.

Squeak.

"Hey, you—how did you find the sorcerer?" Annie asked Peanut.

Squeak.

"It's a secret, huh?" said Annie. She turned to Jack. "Where's the flute?"

He held up the mammoth bone. Then he placed it on the M carved into the floor. Next to the mango from the rain forest. Next to the moonstone from the time of ninjas.

“Moonstone, mango, mammoth bone … ” Annie said. “We need just one more M thing. Then Morgan will be free from her spell.”

“Tomorrow,” said Jack.

Annie patted Peanut on the head. “Bye, you,” she said.

She started down the rope ladder.

Jack gathered his things.

He paused and glanced at the mouse. She stared at him with big brown eyes.

“Thanks again for helping us,” he said.

Then he climbed down the rope ladder and jumped onto the ground.

Jack and Annie ran through the Frog Creek woods onto their street.

Their neighborhood looked rosy in the sunset.

It’s great to be back in this *age*, Jack thought. *Warm and safe and almost home*.

“I’m glad we don’t have to go hunting for dinner,” he said.

“Yeah, Mom and Dad already did that,” said Annie, “at the supermarket.”

“I hope they trapped some spaghetti and meatballs,” said Jack.

“I hope they trapped a pizza,” said Annie.

“Hurry, I’m starving,” said Jack.

They ran up their sidewalk and through their front door.

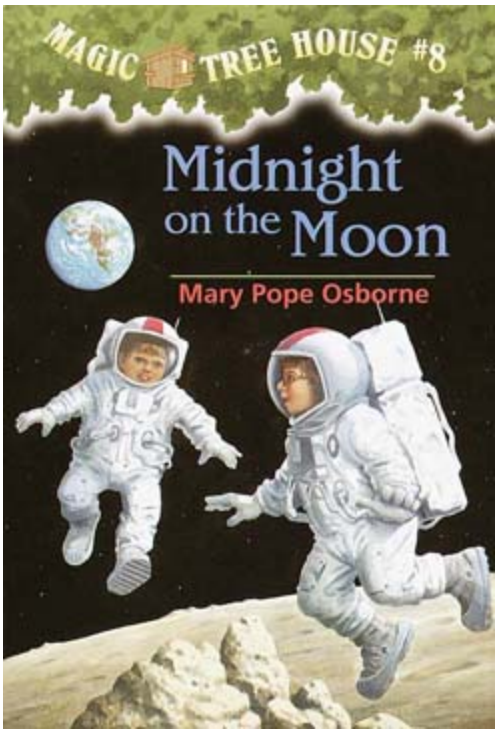
“We’re home!” shouted Annie.

“What’s for dinner?” shouted Jack.

Here's a special preview of

Magic Tree House #8

Midnight on the Moon



Available now!

Excerpt copyright © **1996** by

Published by Random House Children's Books,

a division of Random House, Inc., New York.

1
By Moonlight

"Jack!" whispered a voice.

Jack opened his eyes. He saw a figure in the moonlight.

"Wake up. Get dressed." It was his sister, Annie.

Jack turned on his lamp. He rubbed his eyes.

Annie was standing beside his bed. She wore jeans and a sweatshirt.

"Let's go to the tree house," she said.

"What time is it?" asked Jack. He put on his glasses.

"Don't look at your clock," said Annie.

Jack looked at his clock. "Oh, man," he said. "It's midnight. It's too dark."

"No, it isn't. The moon makes it bright enough to see," said Annie.

"Wait till morning," said Jack.

"No—now," said Annie. "We have to find the fourth M thing. I have a feeling that the full moon might help us."

"That's nuts," said Jack. "I want to sleep."

“You can sleep when we come back home,” said Annie. “No time will have passed.”

Jack sighed. “Oh, brother,” he said.

But he got out of bed.

“Yay!” whispered Annie. “Meet you at the back door.” She tiptoed out of Jack’s room.

Jack yawned. He pulled on his jeans and sneakers and a sweatshirt. He put his notebook and pencil into his backpack. Then he crept down the stairs.

Annie opened the back door. Quietly, they stepped outside.

“Wait—” said Jack. “We need a flashlight.”

“No, we don’t. I told you—the moon will light our way,” said Annie. And she took off.

Jack sighed, then followed her.

Annie was right, thought Jack. The moon was so bright that he could see his shadow. Everything seemed washed with silver.

Soon they left their street. Annie led the way into the Frog Creek woods. It was much darker under the shadows of the trees.

Jack looked up, searching for the tree house.

“There!” said Annie.

The magic tree house was shining in the moonlight.

Annie grabbed the rope ladder and started climbing up.

“Careful—go slowly,” said Jack.

He followed her up the ladder and into the tree house.

Moonlight streamed through the window.

It shone on the letter M that shimmered on the wooden floor.

It shone on the three M things that rested on the M: a *moonstone* from the time of the ninjas, a *mango* from the Amazon rain forest, and a *mammoth bone* from the Ice Age.

"We need just one more M thing," said Annie, "to free Morgan from her spell."

Squeak.

"Peanut!" said Annie.

In the dim light, Jack saw a tiny mouse. She sat on an open book.

"You didn't expect to see us this late, did you?" said Annie.

She picked up Peanut. And Jack picked up the open book.

"So where are we going this time?" Annie asked him.

Jack held the book up to the moonlight.

"Uh-oh," he said. "I knew we should have brought a flashlight. I can't read a thing."

He could make out diagrams and shadowy pictures. But he couldn't read a word.

"Look at the cover," said Annie.

The letters were bigger on the cover. Jack squinted at them.

"It's called *Hello, Moon*," he said.

Annie gasped. "We're going to the moon?"

“Of course not,” said Jack. “It’s impossible to go to the moon without tons of equipment.”

“Why?”

“There’s no air. We couldn’t breathe. Not only that, we’d boil to death if it was day and freeze to death if it was night.”

“Yikes,” said Annie. “So where do you think we are going?”

“Maybe a place where people train to be astronauts,” said Jack.

“That sounds neat,” said Annie.

“Yeah,” said Jack. He’d always wanted to meet astronauts and space scientists.

“So say the wish,” said Annie.

Jack opened the book again. He pointed to a picture of a dome-shaped structure.

“I wish we could go there,” he said.

The wind started to blow.

The tree house started to spin.

It spun faster and faster and faster.

Then everything was silent.

Absolutely silent. As quiet and still as silence could be.

Are you a fan of the Magic Tree House® series?

Visit our

MAGIC TREE HOUSE®

Web site

at

MagicTreeHouse.com

Exciting sneak previews of the next book.

Games, puzzles, and other fun activities.

Contests with super prizes.

And much more!

Guess what?

Jack and Annie have a musical CD!

For more information about

MAGIC TREE HOUSE: THE MUSICAL

(including how to order the CD!),

visit www.mthmusical.com.

Discover the facts

behind the fiction with the

MAGIC TREE HOUSE® RESEARCH GUIDES

The must-have, all-true companions for your favorite Magic Tree House® adventures!

Magic Tree House® Books

#1: Dinosaurs Before Dark

#2: The Knight at Dawn

#3: Mummies in the Morning

#4: Pirates Past Noon

#5: Night of the Ninjas

#6: Afternoon on the Amazon

#7: Sunset of the Sabertooth

#8: Midnight on the Moon

#9: Dolphins at Daybreak

#10: Ghost Town at Sundown

#11: Lions at Lunchtime

#12: Polar Bears Past Bedtime

#13: Vacation Under the Volcano

#14: Day of the Dragon King

#15: Viking Ships at Sunrise

#16: Hour of the Olympics

#17: Tonight on the *Titanic*

#18: Buffalo Before Breakfast

#19: Tigers at Twilight

#20: Dingoes at Dinnertime

#21: Civil War on Sunday

#22: Revolutionary War on Wednesday

#23: Twister on Tuesday

#24: Earthquake in the Early Morning

#25: Stage Fright on a Summer Night

#26: Good Morning, Gorillas

#27: Thanksgiving on Thursday

#28: High Tide in Hawaii

Merlin Missions

#29: Christmas in Camelot

#30: Haunted Castle on Hallows Eve

#31: Summer of the Sea Serpent

#32: Winter of the Ice Wizard

#33: Carnival at Candlelight

#34: Season of the Sandstorms

#35: Night of the New Magicians

#36: Blizzard of the Blue Moon

#37: Dragon of the Red Dawn

#38: Monday with a Mad Genius

#39: Dark Day in the Deep Sea

#40: Eve of the Emperor Penguin

#41: Moonlight on the Magic Flute

#42: A Good Night for Ghosts

#43: Leprechaun in Late Winter

#44: A Ghost Tale for Christmas Time

Magic Tree House® Research Guides

Dinosaurs

Knights and Castles

Mummies and Pyramids

Pirates

Rain Forests

Space

Titanic

Twisters and Other Terrible Storms

Dolphins and Sharks

Ancient Greece and the Olympics

American Revolution

Sabertooths and the Ice Age

Pilgrims

Ancient Rome and Pompeii

Tsunamis and Other Natural Disasters

Polar Bears and the Arctic

Sea Monsters

Penguins and Antarctica

Leonardo da Vinci

Ghosts

Leprechauns and Irish Folklore

Rags and Riches: Kids in the Time of Charles Dickens

More Magic Tree House®

Games and Puzzles from the Tree House